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SENSITIVE  
SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR EAP, EAP/MTS, INR/EAP, DRL/PHD, DRL/IRF

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SUBJECT: EAST JAVA AND CENTRAL SULAWESI: RHETORIC HEATS UP PEACEFUL  
PROTESTS LINKING US TO ISRAELI ACTION IN GAZA

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This message is sensitive but unclassified. Please protect accordingly.

11. (SBU) Summary: Demonstrations against Israeli military action in the Gaza strip remain peaceful in Surabaya. Four recent demonstrations have focused on the Consulate itself and one on the Consular Agency in Bali. In Surabaya, protestors led by a local leader in the Islamic Cleric's Association (MUI), entered the front courtyard of one of Indonesia's few synagogues on January 7. Some demonstrators called for the "sweeping" of Israelis and "evicting" of Americans coupled with a boycott of US products. Local media report small demonstrations occurring daily in other cities in East Java. In Central Sulawesi demonstrators ransacked a Kentucky Fried Chicken restaurant in Palu. In Poso, some demonstrators who participated in past sectarian conflict locally have "registered" to participate in jihad in Palestine. The Consulate was able to continue safe operations during the demonstrations. End Summary

12. (SBU) Demonstrations at Congen Surabaya opposing Israeli military action in Gaza remain peaceful. There has not been any violence, injury or arrest despite calls to "sweep" Israelis and Americans. In 2007 two members of the Islamic Defenders Front (FPI) were arrested and eventually convicted for damaging the Consulate's front gate during a 2006 demonstration. The term "sweep" has been used by FPI elsewhere in Indonesia to describe everything from makeshift road blocks to ransacking businesses and intimidation. As a consequence of the 2006 demonstration, Surabaya city authorities maintain a "demonstration limit line" one hundred meters to either side of the Consulate's front entrance. This new line, coupled with well-coordinated police response has greatly improved the safety of the Consulate.

Now Routine and Largely Peaceful

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13. (SBU) On January 9 thirty members of Masyarakat Ormawa Uws, an Islamic Student Group, burned the Israeli flag and collected donations for Palestine during their demonstration at the Consulate. Three members of the group requested direct

negotiations with the US Consul General, the police refused to let them pass their barricade. Protestors were met by 75 police from the Indonesian National Police Mobile Brigade (BRIMOB) uniformed and undercover police. No arrests were made, there was no damage to property, and the demonstration ended peacefully.

14. (SBU) On January 8, roughly one thousand members of Front Umat Islam (FUI), Forum Pembela Islam (FPI) from Lamongan and Sidoarjo and Forum Madura Bersatu (Formabes) demonstrated at Congen Surabaya. The Secretary General of FPI, Mohamad Khaerudin said "the U.S. is behind Israel's attack on Palestine." They demanded the UN take action or they will "sweep" Israeli tourists and boycott U.S. products. The chair of Formabes, HR Nasir Zaini claimed that 55 members of his organization had signed up for jihad in Palestine. Some thirty FPI protestors tried to outflank police by using a side street to access the Consulate's front gate but were stopped by police. Approximately 400 Mobile Brigade and Surabaya city police were on hand to protect the Consulate.

#### Surabaya's Synagogue a Target

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15. (SBU) Protestors entered the courtyard of the Jalan Kayoon Synagogue and burned Israeli flags and symbolically "sealed" the courtyard gate with a chain on January 7. A small Star of David, part of a mezuzah door ornament at the building's entrance was reportedly broken and burned by protestors.

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Abdushomad Buchori, Head of East Java Islamic Clerics Association told local media that the synagogue is a "symbol of Judaism and Zionism and should be closed permanently." Congen Surabaya confirmed that the Synagogue courtyard gates are now locked from within by the synagogue's caretakers and is not now "sealed" with a chain by protestors. The caretaker told Congen Surabaya that no further demonstrations have occurred there since January 7.

#### Largest Ever Demonstration at Bali Consular Agency

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16. (SBU) Roughly 300 men and women from a various Islamic organizations, NGO's, and universities protested Israel at the U.S. Consular Agency in Denpasar on January 2. Two provincial legislators from the Prosperous Justice Party (PKS) joined the students march from the governor's mansion to the Consular Agency. The demonstrators chanted, "Israel is barbaric", "America is a puppet of Israel", and "America is the Father of Israel". This was the largest demonstration on record at the U.S. Consular Agency in Denpasar and the facility was closed at noon as a precaution.

#### Central Sulawesi

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17. (SBU) The most recent and largest demonstration in Central

Sulawesi has been in Palu where hundreds of members from the Muslim Students Association (HMI), the Indonesia Islamic Student Association (PII), and various Islamic organizations gathered in front of a Kentucky Fried Chicken restaurant on January 7. A local witness told Congen Surabaya that the demonstrators called for a general boycott of U.S. products. The protest was peaceful until some started to burn tires and U.S. and Israeli flags. Demonstrators then forced their way into the restaurant, breaking chairs and stealing frozen chicken and restaurant supplies. They demanded that the KFC close for three days. The restaurant owner agreed to close on Friday, January 9 and opened the next day. Events in Gaza have become linked with Central Sulawesi's own long-standing sectarian conflict. In Poso, some men known locally as combatants during the conflict have started to "register" as volunteers for jihad in Palestine. So far 50 people have registered for jihad through Forum Mujahid Poso, and are reportedly undergoing physical training.

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